The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accurately and without interpretations of matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and also gives information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE— 1 BILLION DOLLARS IN WAR SAVINGS BONDS FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1633 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JULY 28, 1942 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 32, NO. 30

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Too many people are trying to make hay while the war lasts. Everybody is trying to take his bit, from petty profiteering to wholesale hoggery. And as usual, the workers are caught in the middle.

Price control and rent control were supposed to stop raids on the poor man's pocketbook. But the raids still continue. The cost of living is still going up. Mr. Hedgeson's ceilings are full of holes. They are made of rubber in many instances or they just don't cover enough territory.

Now the worker has nothing to sell but his labor. He can't cheapen his product "on account of war." He can't offer a less expensive service "for greater profit" "for economic reasons." On the contrary, he has to work harder and produce more to win the war. He is giving more and getting less.

Yet when the worker, milked dry by myriad profiteers, asks for higher wages so he and his family can get enough to eat and carry on, a great hue and cry is raised about "inflation."

To say that higher wages cause inflation is just as foolish and evil as Hitler's contention that Holland and Belgium were menacing Germany's borders.

No "Pie" For Labor

Higher wages are not the cause but the inevitable result of inflation. Labor is not invading the national economy for purposes of plunder. It is standing its ground in sheer self-defense. Labor is not trying to get any "pie." It is being handed a crust.

Before going any further with this statement of facts, let us admit that we are not an expert economist. In fact, we have a deep and instinctive distrust of professional economists, knowing from past experience how figures may be juggled to prove any lie.

But it seems to us a matter of plain common-sense that American workers today are earning a lot more than they are getting. In other words, their productivity has increased tremendously. We are only to read the glowing reports of ships being built in half the time previously required to get concrete proof of this point. And this increased productivity is not limited to shipyards. Every war industry is breaking production records and beating production schedules.

Now labor is paid on a time basis. So if workers produce an article in less time, it follows that the labor cost per unit must be cut down. And since the number of units produced has mounted so greatly, the savings in labor costs are corresponding by heightened.

All of this is incontrovertible. But while this is happening and while labor is saving the Government and industry many millions of dollars, the real wages of the workers are being slashed by profiteering and inflation. And that means that while the workers are earning more, they are getting less.

The Same Old Greed

Unless the workers are given a part of the savings in labor costs which they are achieving by their own toil, America will be killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

It takes money to live and keep strong and healthy. The workers are earning this money. But they are not getting it. Therefore, the more their standards are reduced the less efficient their work will become.

The answer is obvious—pay the workers a little more toward what they are actually earning. But at this point the reactionary economists and newspaper editorial writers start shrieking "inflation." To put more money in the pockets of workers, they say, must bring inflation. There is a limited amount of purchasable, consumer goods, they argue, and if there is more loose money in circulation than can be spent for available products, inflation results.

In other words, let the rich get all they want and let the worker starve.

There is the secret behind the solid wall of opposition to deserved wage increases! It is the plutocratic wall in front of profits. The boys that have don't want to share with those that haven't. They don't think Americans should be on even terms. They haven't yet heard that when a nation goes to war all things become scarce, all of its citizens must be on an equal footing and submit to fair and square rationing.

Sure they believe in democracy. But not when it affects their pocketbooks, their mansions, their well-stocked larders and their private wine-cellars.

It's not fear of inflation that's behind the hysterical opposition to wage increases. It 's just the same old greed.

British Seamen's Club Dedicated; Financed by Ladies' Garment Workers

London, Eng.—The Seamen's Club in Piccadilly Green, financed by the initial contribution of $75,000 from the War Relief Fund raised by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, was dedicated here at a memorable ceremony, that was attended by leaders of the merchant ships of Great Britain, serve as a symbol of this devoted loyalty to a common and exalting cause, which may in further days lead to a firm resolution of the organized labor movement and of all lovers of freedom, democracy and humanity, to work out of the blood, toil and sacrifice of this struggle we shall achieve a durable peace in a world forever rid of hatreds, persecution and discrimination—a durable peace in a world habitable for the common people everywhere, without regardless of race, color and creed.

"Whether we run sewing machines in factories or in our own homes is our grandest determination to win this war no matter what the cost, no matter how long it takes to accomplish it.

"The very worth and value of living will be in jeopardy for our own generation and for generations to come, unending tyranny faces us—if we lose. Win we must, and win we shall!"

Street Car and Bus Operators Win $2,000,000 Wage Boost in Detroit

Detroit, Mich.—Wage adjustments that will make Detroit's union street car and bus operators the highest paid mass transportation workers in the world were the result of an arbitration award.

The increase, which amounts to 20 per cent for bus drivers and 18 per cent for motormen and conductors on trolley cars, will add almost two million dollars a year to the incomes of these 4,500 employes. Raises are retroactive April 1 and will amount to between $135 and $150 back pay per man.

Under the terms of the award street car motormen and conductors will receive 81 per hour after one year of service, and bus operators $1.01 per hour. The overtime rate was doubled and now becomes 90 cents an hour additional after eight hour's work. Operators instructing students are to be paid 81 a hour extra. Formerly they received 50 cents per day. The increase in wages amounted to 16 cents per hour for bus operators and 13 cents for motormen and conductors.

These employes of this municipally-owned property are members of Division 26 of the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employes, AFL. Arbitration proceedings after attempts at negotiation failed.

The board of arbitration consisted of Thomas F. Chawke, Detroit attorney, for the union; Paul E. Krause, corporation counsel, for the department of street railways, and Alex J. Grosbeck, former Governor of Michigan, chairman and impartial member of the board. The case of the union was presented by C. David Zimring, director of the labor division of the Middle West, Chicago.

Just a year ago the members of the amalgamated association increased their earnings by about a million dollars under an arbitration award which increased the hourly rate six cents and included improved working conditions valued at four cents an hour.

CHICAGO BUILDING TRADES OPPOSE FORCED SAVINGS

Chicago, Ill.—The Chicago and Cook County Building and Construction Trades Council, representing 125,000 workers, unanimously adopted a resolution favoring the "voluntary and democratic method" for implementing the plan to have at least ten per cent of the national income invested in war savings bonds "rather than forced savings by law." The council recommended that each of its members subscribe ten per cent of his income through the payroll allotment plan or otherwise and in favor of the purchase of war savings bonds.

Total purchases by 32 labor groups affiliated with the council since December 7 were $12,189,000.

Convention Call!

Washington, D. C.—The official call for the 62d annual convention of the American Federation of Labor was issued by President William Green and Secretary-Treasurer George Meany to all affiliated unions.

The convention will open at 10 a.m. Oct. 5 in the Royal York Hotel, Toronto, Canada. More than 600 delegates are expected to attend the two-week conclave.

Emphasizing the gravity of the war, the call declares that the lives of almost six millions members in the United States and Canada, the official convention call said:

"The World War which is causing death, misery, suffering and devastation in all countries throughout the world will cast its shadows over our deliberations. The decisions which will be made by the convention will be in the light of world war events. The change from a peace time to a war time economy must be taken into account in the consideration of all social, economic, political and industrial questions which will be submitted to the convention for action.

"One thing is sure and certain; the officers and delegates who will be in attendance at the convention will be united in a common purpose—to win the war and save freedom. An examination of the record made by the American Federation of Labor since Pearl Harbor when the Japanese so treacherously and traitorously attacked our Government shows that our great nuggament has staunchly and definitely supported the Government's war effort to the fullest extent of its ability.

"We recognize that the issue involved in the tragic conflict affects the future well-being and happiness of the masses of working men and women throughout the world. If Hitler, Mussolini, Hirohito and their allies win, the totalitarian form of government will be imposed upon defeated nations. If the United Nations win, democracy wins; freedom, liberty and justice will triumph, dictatorship will be destroyed and the rule of the people will be supreme.

"Those who attend the convention will be influenced by one thought—a single desire—a single purpose and a determination that Hitler and his allies must be defeated at any cost. All action taken and every decision made by the delegates in attendance at the convention will be based upon that one common purpose—the winning of the war."

Council Meeting Opens

Atlantic City, N. J.—The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor will open its regular summer meeting at the Hotel Chelsea here on Aug. 4.

Foremost on the calendar of the Council's business are grave problems affecting labor in the war, especially the wage and inflation questions.

Besides these critical matters, the Council will draft at this meeting its annual report to the forthcoming convention of the AFL which is scheduled for Oct. 5 in Toronto, Canada.

U.S.O. Praises AFL "Stage" Unions For Giving Shows To Armed Forces

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor and the U.S.O. have joined in saluting the entertainment unions of the AFL on the July 25 "Labor For Victory" program for their splendid work in providing free entertainment for America's soldiers and sailors.

The show starred Lansing Hatfield, young Metropolitan Opera baritone, who sang three stirring selections accompanied by an NBC orchestra. Mr. Hatfield, who has just completed a two-week tour of Army and Navy camps in Georgia and Florida and is going on to Alaska and Iceland for a week tour of the same kind in New England during August, contributed his services to the program "as a appreciative tribute to America's productive workers and to the spirit of the day of victory by their hard work."

Mr. Lawrence Phillips, Executive Vice President of U.S.O. Camp Shows, said his organization has given more than 5,000 separate performances, entertaining more than 2,000,000 soldiers, sailors, marines and coast guardsmen, since June 1, 1941.

"I can't speak too highly of the great cooperation which we have received from these unions and their members. It is an inspiring thing to find working men and women so eager and ready to donate their time to this important service for our men in uniform.

"Mr. Hatfield, for instance, is a member of three guilds—Actors Equity, the American Guild of Musical Artists and the American Federation of Radio Artists. All these unions have supplied us with many top-notch artists. The American Federation of Radio Artists has given us the cream of radio entertainers. Actors Equity has come through with stars of the dramatic stage. The Screen Actors Guild has marched a steady procession of movie stars into our camp shows. The American Federation of Musicians has permitted us to use big name bands. The Stagehands' Union, the American Guild of Variety Artists, the agents' and management unions have all been more than cooperative with us in putting on our shows at military posts."

"The U.S.O. is determined to give our men in uniform the best there is in the way of entertainment and I know that the entertainers themselves and their unions will continue to give us every assistance."

Our Next Radio Program

Washington, D. C.—The letter carrier is perhaps the most popular public servant on the government payroll and he gets the worst "cussing."

That is to be the theme of the next "Labor For Victory" broadcast Aug. 8 from 10:15 to 10:30 p.m. over a nation-wide NBC network.

The story of what the letter carriers are doing to aid the nation's war effort will be dramatized on this program under the auspices of the National Letter Carriers Association and will then make a brief talk.

Be sure to listen in!

GREEN DEMANDS ACTION ON ANTI-POLL TAX BILL

Washington, D. C.—President William Green of the American Federation of Labor urged officers of State federations of labor and city central bodies to request their members of the House of Representatives to sign the petition inducing Rep. Arthur A. Ditter Committee to report the anti-poll tax bill to the House.

"The American Federation of Labor has endorsed the Anti-Poll Tax measure H. R. 7024," Mr. Green said. "This measure provides for the abolition of the poll tax requirement as a prerequisite in elections which is in effect in a number of states.

"We maintain that American citizens should be accorded the right to vote in this war and that the payment of poll tax should not be imposed as a condition of such right. A petition is being circulated among the Members of Congress calling upon the House Judiciary Committee to report the bill for passage to the House. 61 Members of Congress have signed the petition. 218 signatures are required before the petition becomes effective."

REED'S BID FOR GOVERNOR OPPOSED BY KANSAS LABOR

Coffeyville, Kansas.—The executive officers of the Kansas State Federation of Labor and the Labor Press Association of Kansas adopted a resolution condemning Senator Clyde M. Reed for his anti-labor position, opposing his nomination for governor in the coming primaries on the Republican ticket, and if nominated pledging organized labor's full support to cause his defeat.

The resolution charged that Senator Reed is running "on an anti-labor platform, played strongly on the drastic anti-labor law," and that he "seeks glory and publicity by vicious and unwarranted attacks upon organized labor" which are a "betrayal of the farmer who produces and the industrial worker who produces the materials so vital in our war effort."

VICKERY SAYS SHIPYARDS LABOR PROBLEM IS ENDED

Washington, D. C.—Workers have done such a splendid job in the production's shipyards that there no longer is any labor problem there, Rear Admiral Howard L. Vickery, vice chairman of the Maritime Commission, announced.

The workers, he said, have responded quickly to training methods and are showing steadily increasing efficiency. Management also is improving and "we have more shipbuilding brains in America than ever before," Vickery added.

The only bottleneck is steel, he declared. If enough steel comes from the mills, the shipyards will be able to meet or surpass President Roosevelt's shipbuilding goals, the admiral predicted.

Wage Freezing "Out The Window" Roosevelt Tells AFL-CIO Leaders; Henderson Interference Blasted

Labor And Industry Join In Pledge Of United War Aid To Roosevelt

Washington, D. C.—Spokesmen for labor and management assured President Roosevelt that they wished to do everything possible to help win the war and to that end had begun for the first time in their history a joint canvass of ways and means of carrying out their common pledge.

At a significant White House conference the representatives of labor and industry presented the following statement to the President:

"We have come here this morning to express to you our joint desire to cooperate in every possible way to win this war.

"We realize that in this critical hour, the future of our American system, comprising free management and free labor, is at stake. We must win the war to preserve that system for the future.

"Having demonstrated devotion to the nation's war effort in an astounding war production record, we now wish to assure you that for the hard pull to victory ahead, the representatives of the four great employe-employer organizations have for the first time in history have sat down together voluntarily to canvass what more we can do to win the war.

"At our initial meeting, it was agreed to call upon you, Mr. President, to reaffirm jointly our whole-hearted cooperation for uninterrupted war production, and to give a demonstration to our own country and to the whole world, of the unity of purpose and action of American management and labor. That is the sole reason why we are here."

President Roosevelt was reported to be highly pleased by the statement which was presented to him jointly by President William Green and Secretary-Treasurer George Meany of the AFL; President Philip Murray and Secretary-Treasurer James Carey, of the CIO; President Eric A. Johnston and National Representative Joyce O'Hara, of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce; and President William P. Witherow of the National Association of Manufacturers.

Green Discloses President Is Favorable To Labor's Position

Washington, D. C.—Labor again has repulsed the advocates for compulsory wage freezing.

At an important White House conference, leaders of the AFL and the CIO were assured by President Roosevelt that he has no intention of seeking to abolish collective bargaining nor of barring wage increases by legislation or decree.

The President's "War Labor Cabinet" incisted at the conference that existing machinery for settlement of wage disputes is perfectly adequate to prevent inflationary tendencies.

AFL President William Green later told newsmen:

"We reminded the President that at the outbreak of the war our organized labor agreed to relinquish its right to strike for the durnation with the distinct understanding that collective bargaining would be continued and protected.

"Under that agreement a definite procedure was established. Wage disputes were to be handled first through the processes of collective bargaining. If that failed, then conciliation and mediation were to be resorted to with recourse to the National War Labor Board for final settlement.

"We told the President that no agencies of the Government other than those specifically designated in this procedure should interfere in wage matters."

Asked to comment on the President's reaction to this statement of policy, Mr. Green said:

"We came away from the conference with the impression that President Roosevelt reacted favorably to our position."

Mr. Green also disclosed that the President said he was giving careful study to the AFL ten-point program for curbing inflation.

It was reported in the daily press that the President has several plans in mind, one of which would call for the appointment of Governor Herbert H. Lehman as head of the U. S. economic arbiter for shaping Federal wage policies.

When asked to elaborate on labor's demand that Price Administrator Leon Henderson be kept out of the wage picture, Mr. Green pointed out that interference by Henderson's representative had wrecked the wage stabilization conference for the aircraft industry on the West Coast.

"This unwarranted interference," he added, "has disturbed morale in this vital war industry and has had a bad effect on production."

Meanwhile Congressional leaders clearly indicated they had no desire or intention of dealing with the wage freezing legislative proposals before Congress. It was further evident that despite a torrid series of "scare" stories in the newspapers, President Roosevelt is not considering asking for such legislation.

The conference of the labor leaders with the President served to clear up these points and to reassure workers throughout the nation that the Government has no intention to make from the victims of the anti-inflation drive.

AFL And British Labor Agree To Cooperate With Soviet Unions

Washington, D. C.—A complete understanding has been reached between the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress and the American Federation of Labor regarding direct and indirect collaboration between the American Federation of Labor, the British Trades Union Congress and the Soviet Trade Unions.

William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, announced the receipt of a cablegram officially advising him that the General Council of the British Trade Union Congress accepted the proposal made by the executive council of the American Federation of Labor to Sir Walter Citrine, general secretary, British Trades Union Congress, when he met with the executive council at Washington, D. C., on May 22, 1942.

"This action is taken by the British Trades Union Congress and the executive council of the American Federation of Labor to promote understanding, good will and cooperation between the working people of both nations involved on both sides of the Atlantic and to develop the highest degree of unity of action in the prosecution of the war effort," Mr. Green said.

The proposal referred to reads as follows and is made public herewith for the first time:

"That American Federation of Labor is fully aware of the issues involved in the world struggle now engaging all civilized world and is fully mindful of the responsibilities resting on our government, our labor movement, as well as other national groups.

"Among other things, our task is that of interpreting the events of this crisis and, the role of labor in meeting that crisis. We look forward to a post-war world that will provide economic opportunity for the people of all lands, to free them from fear of hunger and misery and to give them the right of free speech, freedom of association, and freedom of opportunity.

"In order to have these rights, there must be an end of aggression and domination, so that free self-government may exist for all people.

"Therefore, it is imperative for national labor movements to do their full part both in shaping developments within their own countries and in international agreements that will make the sacrifices and the defeat of the Axis forces of tyranny and of barbarism, now rampant in the world. It is our duty and responsibility to make secure for all time freedom everywhere and help shape the world that will build the peace of the world for all time.

"Where international relationships already exist they should be maintained and extended to the full, that understanding and goodwill shall be maintained and enabled to work in unity and cooperation whenever and wherever channels are available. To these ends we welcome and gratefully appreciate the visit of the Secretary of the British Trades Union Congress. His visit here is evidence of the strong and mutually helpful fraternal relationships that have long existed between the American Federation of Labor and the British Trades Union Congress.

"It is in the light of the foregoing that we have considered at length the suggestion of the British Trades Union Congress in the best interests of all we propose the establishment of an Anglo-American Trade Union Committee, consisting of an equal number of representatives of the British Trades Union Congress and of the American Federation of Labor, with privileges extended to the American Federation of Labor to include in the representation of American labor the representatives of any other bona fide trade union for duty.

"It is further proposed that this committee meet at stated periods alternately in our respective countries; that it shall function under terms and conditions reserving to each full and complete autonomy, but permit and encourage the greatest possible degree of cooperation in carrying on current war activities and requirements and dealing with problems related therefrom.

"It is our firm judgment that through the medium of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee the British members of that committee will have the benefit of information and matters concerning the trade unions of Soviet Russia. Thus we will be able to have this arrangement to render all practical aid to the Russian workers in the prosecution of the war. Further this arrangement opportunity is presented to the British Trade Union Congress to take such steps as may be advisable to inform the Soviet trade unions of the work carried on through the proposed Anglo-American Trade Union Committee, and thus act as a liaison with the trade unions of the U. S. S. R. on any matter of direct concern to the trade unions which may arise. Future experiences and developments will indicate whatever additional steps may be required to meet whatever emergency or urgency may take place from time to time.

"It is our sincere hope that this proposal may meet with favorable consideration and acceptance on the part of the British Trades Union Congress. To avoid any possible delay in bringing this greater relationship into immediate realization, the executive council hereby directs the appointment of a committee to meet the London Federation of Labor of a committee, of which he shall be a member, authorized to enter into immediate negotiations with the secretary of the British Trades Union Congress and conclude arrangements embracing this suggestion and proposal.

"It is to be noted that the American Federation of Labor has from the very inception of this great world struggle pledged its unstinted aid and support to the government in whatever undertaking or enterprise it has ventured into to defeat the Axis powers and all of the hideous conceptions embraced in their bringing this great world struggle upon the civilized and barbaric peoples. In addition and of our own volition, in behalf of our trade unions and in cooperation with other voluntary groups we have endeavored at best we can and to the limit of our abilities to render such aid and comfort, encouragement and assistance, to the workers of all lands fighting on the side of democracy, as opportunity provided. The whole of our program has been based on the threat of invasion and conquest of the people of the world and Hitlerism. We express unbounded admiration for the dauntless courage of the working people of Great Britain and Russia and of all the United Nations in their valiant resistance to the powers of despotism and of barbarism, and to the workers of all lands temporarily crushed and subjugated under the heel of Hitlerism. We express hope for their early liberation and reentry into the family of free nations and free peoples."

BARRACKS FOR WORKERS DEFEATED BY AFL UNIONS

Philadelphia, Pa.—A plan of National Housing Administrator John B. Blandford, Jr., to erect barracks instead of decent housing for 500 Navy yard workers here has been defeated by the combined efforts of the Building & Construction Trades Council, AFL, and the Navy Yard and the Philadelphia Housing Authority.

The only excuse given by Blandford for his proposal was an alleged lack of building materials. James L. McDevitt, business manager of the building council and president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor, pointed out that there is almost no material to build barracks as it does proper housing.

"No one," McDevitt asserted, "knows how long the war will last. Certainly it will not be a short war. And even after its close, we will be unwilling to shut down our entire war production program over night.

"With this in mind it seems unreasonable to erect a lot of flimsy and cheap sheds and expect war workers to live in them without privacy of any kind."